

THE INFLUENCE OF MENTOR TRAINING AND SUPPORT ON ACADEMIC
MENTOR SELF-EFFICACY AND RELATIONSHIP QUALITY: FROM THE
PERSPECTIVES OF ADULT VOLUNTEER MENTORS AND MIDDLE SCHOOL
YOUTH

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ABSTRACT

**KARYL JACQUELINE SHAND ASKEW: The Influence Of Mentor Training And Support
On Academic Mentor Self-Efficacy and Relationship Quality: From The Perspectives Of
Adult Volunteer Mentors And Middle School Youth
(Under the direction of Judith Meece)**

This descriptive study uses social cognitive theory to explore factors contributing to efficacy of adult mentors of middle school students in a school-based academic mentoring program. Using structured interviews and survey measures, the study uncovered factors that mentors' perceive as increasing their self-efficacy. Findings suggest that many factors contribute to mentors' efficacy. Among these are mentor-youth relationship duration, formal training, and a network of support. Results support theoretical and empirical research claims put forward to enhance efficacy. This study also contributes to knowledge of relationship quality by documenting criteria that mentors use to judge the success of relationships. Relationship quality criteria include: 1) holistic integration of mentor into student's life, 2) perceptions of growth, 3) perceived mentee investment, 4) closeness of the relationship, and 5) perceptions of mentee satisfaction. Results indicate the reciprocally deterministic nature of mentors, mentees, and environmental factors that influence mentoring relationships. Implications for future research and practice are offered.

To those who have mentored me: Judith Meece, Jacqueline Shand, Jeannine LaSovage,
Bettina Bell, and Renee Terrell.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES	vii
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Chapter

I	INTRODUCTION	1
II	REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE	6
	Types of Mentoring Programs	7
	Mentoring Early Adolescents	8
	Relationship Quality	12
	Self-Efficacy Research.....	13
	Mentor Training and Support.....	15
	Pre-Match Mentor Training	15
	On-going Mentor Support.....	16
III	METHODS	17
	Description of Sample.....	17
	Setting	17
	Sample.....	18
	Program Selection.....	18
	Program Description	19
	Measures	21

Document Reviews	21
Mentor Interview	21
Youth Mentor Self-Efficacy Scale.....	21
The Mentoring Relationship Scale.....	22
Study Design.....	22
Analysis.....	24
IV RESULTS	25
Mentor Self-Efficacy	25
Active Participation	27
Training.....	27
Support of a Mentoring Community.....	28
Prior Life Experience	28
Formal Training and Mentor Self-Efficacy	29
Mentor Support Structure	33
Program Staff.....	34
School Staff.....	34
Fellow Mentors.	35
Parents and Guardians.....	36
Relationship Quality	37
Mentors Definition of Relationship Quality	37
Holistic Integration Into Student’s Life.	37
Perceptions of Growth.	38
Perceptions of Mentee Investment.....	39

	Closeness of the Relationship.....	39
	Perceptions of Mentee Satisfaction.....	40
	Relationship Quality and Training.....	40
	Mentee’s Perception of Relationship Quality.....	40
V	DISCUSSION.....	42
	Conclusions.....	42
	Limitations of the Study.....	47
	Implications for Future Research.....	48
	Implications for Practice.....	50
	Appendix A.....	53
	Appendix B.....	54
	Appendix C.....	56
	Appendix D.....	57
	Appendix E.....	58
	Appendix F.....	61
	Appendix G.....	62
	REFERENCES	63

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
1. Factors that increase mentors' self-efficacy	26
2. Program training topics.....	30
3. Training mentors found to be effective in working with students	32

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A well trained and supported volunteer force is a necessary component for the development of high quality, long-term, effective adult-youth mentoring relationships. Mentoring is a popular prevention and intervention strategy (Rhodes & Noam, 2002; Sipe, 2002) that contribute to positive youth development as evidenced by increases in scholastic competence, school engagement, prosocial behavior, and decreases in substance abuse (Aseltine, Dupre, & Lamlein, 2000; DuBois, Holloway, Valentine, & Cooper, 2002; Grineski, 2003; Grossman & Rhodes, 2002; Rhodes, Grossman, & Resch, 2000). In the United States, approximately 2.5 million young people are engaged in mentoring relationships and another 15 million young people are still in need of mentors (Rhodes, Reddy, Roffman, & Grossman, 2005). For the purpose of this study, mentors are defined as non-familial adult volunteers who offer guidance and support to facilitate both academic growth and personal development of an adolescent (the mentee) in the context of a school-based academic mentoring program. Mentor training and support provide the pair with the best chances to succeed in fostering positive youth development and outcomes (Grossman & Rhodes, 2002; Parra, DuBois, Neville, & Pugh-Lilly, 2002; Rhodes, Grossman, & Resch, 2000; Rhodes et al., 2005). This Master's thesis examines first-hand accounts of how mentors view training and support in contributing to efficacious beliefs and perceptions of relationship quality.

Early adolescence is marked by increased tension in parent-child relationships as these relationships undergo renegotiation due to the intense progression of physical, intellectual, and social maturation (Kimmel & Weiner, 1995; Stemmler & Peterson, 1999). Developmental theorists document adolescents' needs for greater autonomy, which require a shift from a parent-centered relationship to a parent-child joint venture (Csikszentmihalyi & Larson, 1984; Erikson, 1968; Miller, 2002; Swanson, 1998). Increases in parent-child conflict are also accompanied by declines in positive student-teacher relations (Eccles, Midgley, Wigfield, Buchanan, Reuman, Flanagan, & Iver, 1993). Research on middle school transition find that middle school students generally report feeling low levels of autonomy, as well as and less supported and cared for by teachers (Davis, 2006; Eccles et al., 1993).

Together, studies on adult-child relations in early adolescence paint a picture of isolation of middle school students from proximal adult role models that can provide the necessary guidance to help them through this challenging developmental period (Viadero, 1995). Mentors that provide nurturing, caring, and trusting interactions that can redefine other adult-child relationships. Research indicates that new working model of mentor-child interaction can be generalized to relationships with parents, teachers, and other adults (Grossman & Rhodes, 2002; Rhodes et al., 2000; Waters & Cummings, 2000), thereby working to rebuild adult support systems.

The presence of caring non-familial adult mentor can support adolescents through difficult life transitions and are characteristic of children who demonstrate resilience (Bernstein-Yamashiro, 2004; Noam & Fiore, 2004; Viadero, 1995). Research indicates that sustained mentoring relationships result in outcomes that contribute to positive development of middle-school aged students as evidenced by increases in scholastic competence, school

engagement, prosocial behavior, and decreases in substance abuse (Aseltine, Dupre, & Lamlein, 2000; DuBois, Holloway, Valentine, & Cooper, 2002; Grineski, 2003; Grossman & Rhodes, 2002; Rhodes et al., 2000). Studies have documented that benefits to youth are greater the longer the relationship persists (DuBois & Neville, 1997), with measurable outcomes to youth becoming apparent as relationships persist beyond six months (Grossman & Rhodes, 2002). Unfortunately, 55% of all mentoring relationships terminate within the first month of the match without realizing any potential benefits (Karcher, Nakkula, & Harris, 2005). In fact, accumulating research studies document that early termination of relationships can result in adverse effects to youth, such as, declines in global self-worth and increases high-risk behavior (DuBois et al., 2002; DuBois & Silverthorn, 2005; Grossman & Rhodes, 2002). Early terminating relationships also have adverse affects on mentors. Mentors that experience failed relationships are often left feeling “frustrated and ineffective” (Karcher et al., 2005), leading to potential declines in volunteers’ interests and future participation in mentoring programs.

There are many reasons why mentee-mentor pairings may prematurely terminate. Mentoring relationships may end due to circumstances beyond the mentor’s control, such as life transitions like graduation or relocation (Grossman & Rhodes, 2002). On the other hand, other partnerships terminate due to variables that may be within mentors’ and program coordinators’ control given proper training. Mentees may shy away from relationships where they perceive the mentors to be unsupportive or unable to relate to them (Grossman & Rhodes, 2002). A mentor may discontinue involvement because of what they perceive to be a lack of student interest or appreciation. Mentors may also find that the time commitment required to support their student exceeded their expectations (Grossman & Rhodes, 2002) or

challenges faced surpass their skills. Proper training and support for mentors may be able to lessen these occurrences.

This study uses Albert Bandura's construct of self-efficacy as a theoretical framework (Bandura, 1977) to examine mentor preparation. Self-efficacy is defined as one's belief in their ability to perform a domain specific task, with higher self-efficacy levels corresponding to higher resolve when it comes to mastery of that task (Bandura, 1977). Self-efficacy therefore functions as a motivational factor for task engagement and achievement (Driscoll, 2000; Pintrich & Schunk, 2002). It follows, that mentors' self-efficacy will contribute higher levels of steadfastness and success in mentoring relationships. For the purpose of this paper, mentor self-efficacy is characterized as the mentor's belief in their ability to contribute to positive outcomes for youth, such as academic, emotional, and social growth.

Research on mentor self-efficacy is sparse. Therefore this study will employ research of teacher efficacy. Mentors, like teachers, serve as role models with the goal of assisting youth in the developing particular skill-sets. Research has demonstrated that higher degrees of teacher self-efficacy tend to correspond to higher levels of student learning and improved student-teacher relations (Ashton, Webb, & Doda, 1983; Davis, 2006; Muijs & Reynolds, 2002). Training has been shown to increase efficacy of teachers (Lamorey & Wilcox, 2005; Tucker, Porter, Reinke, Herman, Ivery, Mack, & Jackson, 2005). This study extends this theoretical framework to examine the connection between mentors' perception of self-efficacy, training, and quality mentoring relationships. Knowledge of mentor training and support can be instrumental in contributing quality relationships that lead to successful youth mentoring outcomes (Karcher, Nakkula, & Harris, 2005; Parra et al., 2002; Riggs, 2000).

This study aims to collect empirical evidence to inform training and support practices of school-based programs in relation to promoting higher levels of mentor self-efficacy. The primary purpose is to examine the relation between mentor training and mentor self-efficacy. In addition, a secondary question seeks to uncover the association between those two variables and the perception of relationship quality. There are three guiding questions:

1. What, if any, types of training and support do mentors perceive as increasing their self-efficacy?
2. Is mentor self-efficacy related to mentee's perceptions of relationship quality?
3. How do mentors define relationship quality?

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The practice of establishing mentoring relationships between caring adults and adolescents is not a new idea. However, empirical research in this area is relatively new. Early research efforts in the mentoring field (prior to the year 2000) were aimed at establishing the outcomes of mentoring programs. As a whole, the initial findings were promising, but inconsistent. For example, a meta-analytic review of 55 mentoring evaluations on the effects of mentoring programs indicated only modest or small benefits to youth (DuBois et al., 2002). The DuBois study proposed that program benefits were increased when strong mentoring relationships were established. Switching the focus from establishing the merit of mentoring programs, current research investigations are focused on understanding the myriad of factors that result in successful individual relationships. There are many potential factors that affect the success of individual mentoring relationships: a) pre-disposition of at-risk students, b) pre-disposition of volunteers, c) the matching process, d) pre-match training, e) on-going training, f) program support and g) the nature of relationships that develop (DuBois, 2005; DuBois et al., 2002; Grossman & Rhodes, 2002; Karcher et al., 2005; Martin, 1996; Parra et al., 2002; Rhodes, Reddy, Grossman, & Lee, 2002). This study will focus on aspects of mentor training and its influence on mentor's self-efficacy and relationship quality. The following is a summary of the literature focused on a discussion of school-based versus community-based mentoring programs, the importance and

challenges of mentoring early adolescents, self-efficacy research, mentoring training, and adult-youth relationship quality.

Types of Mentoring Programs

Mentoring programs vary widely. The two most common types of programs are community-based or school-based. A majority of these programs are community-based, however, school-based programs represent a substantial 35% of existing programs (Sipe, 2002). Community-Based and School-Based programs are inclined to have different program objectives, strengths, and limitations.

In many cases community-based and school-based programs will differ significantly in the objectives they set for mentoring relationships. In general, the goal of community-based mentoring programs is to promote positive social and emotional development through participation in leisure and career-oriented discussions and activities (Grossman & Tierney, 1998; Rhodes et al., 2000). In contrast, or complimentary to that approach, school-based programs seeks to improve academic performance by focusing on improving the following factors: school-engagement and academic achievement, self-esteem, and educational expectations (Blum & Jones, 1993; Martin, 1996; McPartland & Nettles, 1991).

Discussing strength and limitations are likened to considering both sides of a coin. Relationships formed in community-based programs tend to have relationships that endure longer because they are not restricted by an academic school calendar like many school-based programs (Herrera, Sipe, McClanahan, 2000; Rhodes, Grossman, & Roffman, 2002). Community-based programs tend to offer less structure activities leaving mentors with the responsibility of planning their time students, which often allows room for spontaneity and

variety (Herrera et al., 2000). Because of these factors, community-based program appears to be most suited to working professionals and more mature mentors who need flexibility in scheduling and may be better able to handle the greater responsibility (DuBois & Neville, 1997). School-based programs face challenges to maintaining is that the mentoring relationships are restricted to the academic calendar, which limits and disrupts relationship continuity (Portwood, Ayers, Kinnison, Waris, & Wise, 2005, Sipe & Roder, 1999). However, school-based programs provided greater structure and supervision for mentoring relationships, inclusive of program and school staff, largely because the program is housed in a school building (Herrera et al., 2000; Sipe & Roder, 1999). This type of program seemed to be more of fit for college-aged or younger mentors (DuBois & Neville, 1997). Herrera and colleagues (2000) found that despite these differences, the quality of mentoring relationships were about the same, with 90% of mentors reporting that they feel they providing emotional support and assistance to mentee.

Mentoring Early Adolescents

The adolescent period is a time of evaluation, self-organization, decision-making, commitment (Swanson, Spencer, & Peterson, 1998). The middle school years offer opportunities for adults to shape attitudes and beliefs during a time when students are “searching for identity”; developing long-lasting perceptions about learning, work, and values; and making important educational choices that can affect their future (Daisey & Jose-Kampfner, 2002; Schwartz, 1996; Sears, 1995; Swanson, Spencer, & Peterson, 1998).

As a result of this search for identity, young people are also trying to renegotiate interactions between parents and teachers. The literature documents strained relationships between youth and the proximal adults in their lives, such as parents and teachers that can

provide the necessary guidance to help them through this challenging developmental period (Eccles, Midgley, Wigfield, Buchanan, Reuman, Flanagan, & Iver, 1993; Stemmlet & Peterson, 1999; Viadero, 1995). Developmental theorists document adolescents' needs for greater autonomy (Erikson, 1968; Miller, 2002; Swanson et al., 1998), which require a shift from a parent-centered relationship to a parent-child joint venture. (Csikszentmihalyi & Larson, 1984; Erikson, 1968; Miller, 2002; Swanson, 1998) Increases in parent-child conflict are also accompanied by declines in positive student-teacher relations (Eccles et al., 1993). Research on middle school transition find that middle school students generally report feeling low levels of autonomy, as well as and less supported and cared for by teachers (Davis, 2006; Eccles et al., 1993).

Together, studies on adult-child relations in early adolescence paint a picture of isolation of middle school students from proximal adult role models that can provide the necessary guidance to help them through this challenging developmental period (Viadero, 1995). Mentors that provide nurturing, caring, and trusting interactions that can redefine other adult-child relationships. Research indicates that new working model of mentor-child interaction can be generalized to relationships with parents, teachers, and other adults (Grossman & Rhodes, 2002; Rhodes et al., 2000; Waters & Cummings, 2000), thereby working to rebuild adult support systems.

The elementary-middle school transition presents other challenges in terms of academic achievement. Students' intrinsic motivation, the desire to learn for the sake of learning, persistently declines during the transition to middle school (Harter, 1981). This developmental trend may be due to the increasing emphasis on social comparisons and

extrinsic rewards (Pintrich & Schunk, 2002). Students' academic achievement also declines as they progress through middle school (Eccles et al., 1993).

Mentoring is viewed as a protective factor for early adolescents. In particular, many programs and research studies have focused primarily on at-risk populations (Dubois et al., 2002; Portwood, Ayers, Kinnison, Waris, Wise, 2005; Sipe & Roder, 1999). There are a wide variety of definitions for at-risk students. In the articles reviewed, at-risk students were defined by the following criteria: belonging to socioeconomically disadvantaged families (Grossman & Rhodes, 2002; Martin, 1996), residing in urban settings (Martin, 1996; McPartland & Nettles, 1991), possessing high potential for dropping out of school, exhibiting poor academic performance, and receiving teacher referrals based on low quality of classroom performance (Blum & Jones, 1983). At-risk students tend to have more difficulty developing trusting relationships with adults (Grossman & Rhodes, 2002), which can present challenges to establishing mentoring relationships.

Researchers conducted preliminary research regarding the appropriate age to initiate mentoring relationships. Grossman and Rhodes (2002) addressed this issue by exploring predictors of relationship duration and quality. They discovered that matches involving 13 – 16 year olds were 65% more susceptible to early termination of relationships than matches with 10 – 12 year olds. To explain this finding, researchers hypothesized that strong desires for autonomy and independence may contribute declining emotional accessibility. Also, peer and romantic relationships competed for adolescents' attention. These results suggest that window of opportunity to embark in a successful mentoring relationships should be before or during the elementary-middle school transition.

Mentoring programs can offer a developmentally appropriate solution to providing the necessary guidance and support that adolescents need and require for healthy development (Viadero, 1995). Studies indicate that both community-based and school-based programs result in a variety of benefits to middle school youth who participate in mentoring. Students who participate in mentoring experiences demonstrate improvements in scholastic competence and school engagement as evidenced by increases in: amount of completed assignments, grades, class participation, value of school, school attendance (Blum & Jones, 1993; Grossman & Rhodes, 2002; Grossman & Tierney, 1998; McPartland & Nettles, 1991; Rhodes, Grossman, & Resch, 2000). In addition, mentoring relationships foster pro-social behavior with parents, teachers, and peers (Blum & Jones, 1993; Grossman & Rhodes, 2002; Rhodes, Grossman, & Resch, 2000). Student participants also report enhanced global self-worth and perceptions of social acceptance, while being less likely to engage in substance abuse (Grossman & Tierney, 1998; Rhodes et al., 2000).

These findings suggest that mentoring can affect both behavioral and cognitive factors. In general, outcomes vary slightly based on the type of mentoring students engage in. Consistent with program goals, community-based programs tend to be more likely to enhance social and emotional growth of adolescents (Grossman & Rhodes, 2002; Rhodes, Grossman, & Resch, 2000; Grossman & Tierney, 1998). School-based programs show greater potential in advancing school engagement and academic achievement (Blum & Jones, 1993; McPartland & Nettles, 1991). However, research findings demonstrate that, despite program type, students that engage in successful mentoring experiences grow in all of these domains.

In summary, a review of the literature identifies mentoring to be a catalyst for healthy adolescent development. However, mentors of early adolescent youth will likely face obstacles to developing enduring relationships when working with this age group as a result their developmental needs. Program coordinators are challenged to provide effective training and support that empower mentors to adequately manage these challenges and develop quality relationships.

Relationship Quality

There is a need for the development of close relationships between mentors and youth that provide a secure foundation for growth (Noam & Fiore, 2004). These bonds must be established in order to facilitate a team-orientation toward achieving relationship goals and objectives (Kram, 1983; Rhodes et al., 2005). Currently in the mentoring literature, there is no clear definition of relationship quality. In the most general terms, relationship quality encompasses the strength of the interpersonal bond formed between mentors and mentees. Studies have shown that mentoring pairs that perceive low relationship quality tend to report less perceived benefits to youth, shorter relationship duration, less mentor-youth contact, more relationship obstacles, and the need for more support from program staff (Grossman & Rhodes, 2002). Student perceptions of relationship quality have been shown to be an accurate predictor of relationship benefits (Grossman & Rhodes, 2002). Mentors and youth reports of relationship quality tend to be positively correlated (Parra et al., 2002).

Based on initial research findings, mentors and mentees define relationship quality in different ways. Rhodes and her colleagues (Rhodes, Reddy, & Roffman, 2001) suggest that mentees define relationship quality using four factors: 1) the degree of global dissatisfaction with the mentor, 2) the degree of support offered by the mentor when youth experience

problems, 3) the absence of negative sentiments (such as disappointment and anger), and 4) the degree of trustworthiness of the mentor. Little research exists on how mentors define relationship quality. However, one study defined mentor relationship quality by “feelings of closeness” with youth (Parra et al., 2002).

Relationship quality also appears to be related to a mentor’s belief in their ability to be an effective mentor, defined as mentor self-efficacy. Mentors that initially report greater mentor self-efficacy also tend to report higher levels of relationship quality (defined as feelings of closeness) (Parra et al., 2002). Investigations into factors that increase mentors’ self-efficacy can substantially add to our understanding of how to increase quality relationships that have a higher probability to endure and yield benefits to youth.

Self-Efficacy Research

Self-efficacy is defined as one’s belief in their ability to perform a domain specific task, with higher self-efficacy levels corresponding to higher resolve when it comes to mastery of that task (Bandura, 1977). Self-efficacy therefore functions as a motivational factor for task engagement and achievement (Driscoll, 2000; Pintrich & Schunk, 2002). It follows, that mentors’ self-efficacy will contribute higher levels of steadfastness and success in mentoring relationships. For the purpose of this paper, mentor self-efficacy is characterized as the mentor’s belief in their ability to contribute to positive outcomes for youth, such as academic, emotional, and social growth.

Bandura (1977) suggests four sources of information that contribute to efficacy assessments: 1) performance accomplishments; 2) vicarious learning; 3) verbal persuasion; and 4) physiological symptoms. Performance accomplishments included experience and feedback that result from directly engaging in the task. Patterns of success on a task are

likely to increase efficacy beliefs. Vicarious learning involves opportunities to learn through the indirect experiences of viewing the task being modeled by others. Seeing a model skillfully and successfully perform a task can lead to enhanced confidence in one's ability to execute the task. Verbal persuasion usually involves positive encouragement and exhortation received from others. Phrases such as "you can do it" and "you are really skilled in this task" can contribute to positive assessments of one's efficacy on a task. Physiological symptoms refer to positive or negative emotions that are experienced as a result of engaging in the task. For example, feelings of nervousness may be a signal of ineptness which can decrease efficacy. Mentor training program and support that incorporate some or all of these facets are likely to increase mentors' confidence and performance in developing and maintaining beneficial mentoring relationships.

Preliminary research suggests that mentors' efficacy beliefs and perceptions of relationship quality are positively correlated; relationship quality is an indicator of effective mentoring relationships. Research on mentor self-efficacy is sparse. Therefore this study will employ research of teacher efficacy as a guide. Mentors, like teachers, serve as role models with the goal of assisting youth in the developing particular skill-sets. Research has demonstrated that higher degrees of teacher self-efficacy tend to correspond to higher levels of student learning and improved student-teacher relations (Ashton, Webb, & Doda, 1983; Davis, 2006; Muijs & Reynolds, 2002). Training that utilized modeling, provided practice time, and incorporated on-going consultation, has been shown to increase efficacy of teachers to affect student's academic achievement and behavior (Lamorey & Wilcox, 2005; Shachar & Shmuelewitz, 1997; Tucker, Porter, Reinke, Herman, Ivery, Mack, & Jackson, 2005). This study extends this theoretical framework to examine the connection between mentors' self-

efficacy, perceptions of training, and mentee-mentor relationship quality. Knowledge of mentor training and support can be instrumental in contributing to successful youth mentoring outcomes (Karcher, Nakkula, & Harris, 2005; Parra et al., 2002; Riggs, 2000).

Mentor Training and Support

Mentor training and supervision have been found to directly affect mentor retention and mentee outcomes (Karcher et al., 2005). A meta-analytic review of 55 program evaluations (DuBois et al., 2002) identified several best practices that increase the effectiveness of mentoring programs. Among these best practices, the research team identified pre-match mentor training and ongoing mentor support.

Pre-Match Mentor Training

Programs that provide mentor training and support tend to be programs that yield increased benefits to youth (Rhodes, Grossman, & Roffman, 2002). Implicit is an underlying assumption that individuals who receive training to be mentors will possess greater mentor self-efficacy. Approximately, 81% (a sample size of 722 programs) of mentoring programs offer mentors some form of orientation and training (Sipe & Roder, 1999). Research has found that mentors who receive between two and six hours of pre-match training tend to develop higher quality relationships (Herrara, Sipe, & McClanahan, 2000). However, few research studies have empirically tested what types of training have a greater tendency to produce effective mentors who are able to facilitate and maintain quality relationships with youth (Herrara et al., 2000). It is also not clear if a “one-size-fits all” approach to training mentors is ideal given the tremendous variability the types of mentoring programs (Sipe, 2002). The landmark Big Brothers Big Sisters (BBBS) mentoring study proposed that mentor training should incorporate 1) communication and limit-setting skills,

2) tips on relationship building, and 3) recommendations on the best way to interact with a young person (Grossman & Tierney, 1998). This seems to summarize the training topics that other programs tend to provide (Jucovy, 2001; Vujovich, 1999).

On-going Mentor Support

For a variety of reasons (e.g., staffing shortage, budgetary constraints), few programs provide consistent mentor support and on-going training. Sipe and Roder (1999) found that 58% of programs (n=706) contact their mentors once a month or less frequently. Though mentor support is believed to be critical to developing quality relationships, there is not a substantial body of evidence, empirical or experiential, to verify the importance and influence of mentor support in contributing to the quality of mentoring relationships or mentor self-efficacy (Herrera et al, 2000).

In closing, adult mentors provide a developmentally appropriate support structure for middle school youth that promote healthy cognitive, emotional, and social adjustments. However, this developmental period present challenges that mentors must be adequately prepared to address. This study uses Albert Bandura's construct of self-efficacy as a theoretical framework (Bandura, 1977) to examine mentors' efficacy and the impact that training and support have on efficacy levels. It is hypothesized that mentors will endorse aspect of training and support that lead to higher levels of self-efficacy. Further, previous research indicates that perceptions of self-efficacy will be positively correlated with relationship quality, an indicator of mentor achievement. Lastly, this study seeks to add to the body of knowledge on relationship quality by providing criteria that mentors use to assess this component of their relationship.

CHAPTER III

METHODS

Description of Sample

Setting

This study focused on one Midwestern middle school academic mentoring program. The middle school is located in a city near a large state university, the city's largest employer. The United States Census Bureau (2000) report the following demographic information for this city: there are approximately 115,000 residents and 40,000 transient college students; residents are 75% Caucasian, 12% Asian, 9% African- American, 3% Latino, and 1% from other ethnic backgrounds; the median income per household is \$46,000 with 16% of the population classified below the poverty line.

Standard and Poor's (2006) report the following demographics for the middle school. The following school demographics The middle school serves 574 students. The student population consists of 44% Caucasian, 34% African-American, 9% Asian/Pacific Islander, 7% Hispanic, 5% Multi-Racial, and less than 1% American Indian. Approximately, 34% of the school students receive free or reduced lunch. An interview with the school principal uncovered that the middle school suffers from disproportionate number of minority discipline referrals.

Sample

Drawn from a population of 100 mentoring pairs, the sample consists of 128 volunteers that include 64 mentors and 64 middle school students in grades 6 – 8. Mentor consists of mainly of undergraduates that attend the local university. A number of graduate students, as well as working professionals, also volunteer as mentors.

As part of this study, 20 mentors volunteered to participate in telephones interviews. These mentors vary in experience with the program and with their mentee, ranging from two months to three years. Six participants reporting having previous mentoring experience prior to joining this program. Mentoring pairs consist of predominately cross-race, same-gender matches. Mentors academic concentrations reflect diverse interests that include life sciences, social sciences, engineering, and liberal arts. Profiles of the interviewees appear in Appendix A.

Program Selection

The program was chosen because it meets an overwhelming majority of the criteria that mentoring research suggests are indicators of a highly effective programs, such as pre-match training, expectations for frequency of contact, long-term relationship duration, ongoing training for mentors, structured activities, relationship and program implementation monitoring, and parental involvement (DuBois et al., 2002; Herrera, Sipe, & McClanahan, 2000; Rhodes, Reddy, Roffman, & Grossman, 2002). Additionally, the researcher has a previous working relationship with this Midwestern mentoring program. Lastly the program has an underlying philosophy of continuous program development and improvement through reflective evaluation and participant feedback. Therefore the staff was willing to support this study.

Program Description

The program developed from an initiative of the National Science Foundation (NSF) Science and Technology Center housed at the area university. It became an independent 501(c)(3) non-profit organization in November, 2002. The organization supports K – 12 academic mentoring, career mentoring, and career exploration in the county. The organization's goal is to connect college, business, and community mentors with youth to provide educational and career exploration opportunities both inside and outside the classroom. In particular, the middle school program aims to:

1. Provide academic support for children and tackle the growing achievement gaps;
2. Provide career exploration opportunities for children;
3. Provide children, parents, guardians and K-12 staff information about post-high job training and higher educational opportunities;
4. Provide a model mentoring program and career resource clearinghouse for the state.

The organization provides initial orientation and on-going training sessions to volunteer mentors. The two-hour orientation covers the following topics: 1) introduction to the program, 2) role and responsibilities of a mentor, 3) keys to youth development, and 4) tools for working youth. Among the tools for working with youth, mentors are introduced to communication and listening skills, as well as tools for facilitate academic success (such as diagnosing personal learning styles and uncovering weaknesses in study skills). This year monthly on-going training sessions have been made mandatory for all mentors, an additional four hours of training. These on-going training sessions provide more in-depth instruction on components introduced in the orientation sessions.

The middle school mentoring program links volunteer university mentors with middle school students in grades six through eight. The program is currently funded with Title I monies, which restrict participants to the Title I population. Student participants are referred by a teacher or are self-referred. Matches are made on the basis of program staff's knowledge of the mentor and mentee's temperament, scheduling preferences, and interests. The staff currently supports approximately 100 mentoring relationships. Mentors are charged with becoming advisors and advocates for their mentees. Mentors and mentees engage in one-on-one academic tutoring and participate in recreational activities (i.e. potluck socials, educational field trips, job-shadowing tours, and outdoor nature experiences). On average, mentoring pairs are required to meet at least one time a week to focus on academics and once a month for recreational activities. The typical mentoring relationship last for a year, with pairs having been together at least two months at the time this study was conducted. This program tends to have a low termination rate (with only 5 relationships out of the 100 dissolving prematurely this year due to the lack of child and family commitment). Based on the literature, the program qualifies as a model program because the mentoring matches endure for at least an academic year, a timeframe in which the research purports yield positive benefits to youth.

In addition to staff support, mentoring pairs are assigned to "family" groups. The purpose of a family group is to provide mentoring pairs with a supportive and nurturing team of peers. A family leader, typically a more experienced mentor, oversees the group. The family leader manages communications and overall activities of mentors and children within the "family." They are also responsible for communicating regularly with mentors about

relationships, goals, concerns. Structured recreational activities are usually done in family groups.

Measures

Document Reviews

A content-analysis document review of training materials was conducted to identify goals of the program and components of the training. Documents consists of the mentor training manual, workshop materials used in on-going trainings, program website, and newsletters.

Mentor Interview

The mentor interview is qualitative in nature. The structured interview protocol examined mentor perceptions of training and support, self-efficacy beliefs, and perceptions of relationship quality. The researcher worked in collaboration with a program director and coordinators to ensure content-validity of the interview protocol (See Appendix B). In addition, the interview was pilot tested with the assistance of three volunteers from the pool of mentors. Feedback from pilot-test assisted in the revision the interview protocol.

Youth Mentor Self-Efficacy Scale

This survey quantitatively examines mentors' self-efficacy beliefs, particularly in the area of promoting student academic achievement and personal growth. This 18-item scale was adapted from the Mentor Efficacy Scale (MES) developed by Riggs (2000). The MES is used to measure mentor teachers' beliefs in their self-efficacy to train beginning teachers and the subscale has demonstrated a reliability coefficient of 0.87 in previous research (Riggs, 2000). The researcher established content-validity by working in collaboration with a

program director, coordinators, and a program mentor. A copy of the scale is included in Appendix C.

The Mentoring Relationship Scale

This measure is a 15-item survey that measures mentee's relationship satisfaction with sample questions like, "I wish my mentor was different" (See Appendix D). There are four subscales: not dissatisfied ($\alpha=.74$), helped to cope($\alpha=.81$), not unhappy ($\alpha=.85$), trust not broken($\alpha=.81$) (Rhodes, Reddy, Roffman, & Grossman, 2005). The measure was designed to measure lack of negative sentiment, which is found to be a indicator of relationship quality from the adolescent perspective. The survey was designed for the middle school student population and was tested using 50 middle-school aged mentees. The program director and coordinators reviewed the subscale to ensure content-validity for this program.

Study Design

This study utilizes a mixed-method design, employing both quantitative surveys and structured interviews. Forty-eight mentoring pairs were randomly selected to be interviewed from a pool of 64 mentoring pairs that volunteered for the study. The researcher used stratified random sampling to yield an equal representation of mentors that rated themselves high or low on the youth mentor self-efficacy scale. All volunteer mentors and mentees completed surveys. Twenty mentors participated in follow-up interviews to explore factors that increase their self-efficacy.

The researcher was on site to manage the recruitment and collection of consent forms and surveys. The recruitment period lasted for five business days. The researcher distributed consent forms to mentors and mentees at the beginning of their tutoring sessions. Sample

invitation letters are attached in Appendix E. The invitation letter also functioned as the recruitment script. Mentees were instructed to return parental consents along with their completed consent form and survey.

Mentee and mentor surveys are Likert-scale measures. Mentee surveys assessed youths' perceptions of the quality of their mentoring relationship. Mentor surveys assessed their beliefs in their ability to act as a mentor. Completed consent forms, along with the mentor and mentee surveys, were returned to a sealed drop-box in the mentoring office within the school building. After the five-day recruitment period, surveys were placed in the box and mailed to the researcher. The director was instructed not to open the box to preserve confidentiality.

Upon receipt of the consent forms and surveys, the mentor and mentee surveys received a randomly assigned mentor pair number and the identifying information was removed. Twenty mentors were randomly selected from the pool of volunteers who completed surveys. Using the email address they provided on the survey, the selected mentors were individually contacted to schedule a 30 minute structured telephone interview (a sample scheduling script appears in Appendix F). Mentors were given the option to accept or decline the interview. Mentors who declined were replaced by another randomly selected mentor until 20 interviews were scheduled.

Forty-eight mentors received electronic mail invitations. Twenty mentors accepted the invitation; all others declined or were not responsive to the original invitation. Using approximately 15 open-ended questions, the interview explored mentors' perceptions of the effectiveness of training and support that they receive, as well as their satisfaction with their mentoring relationship. The sample interview protocol is attached.

Analysis

This study explores the influence of training and support practices in relation to promoting higher levels of mentor self-efficacy. The surveys were subjected to quantitative analyses. Mentors participated in a 30-minute structured telephone interview.

Surveys were analyzed using the SPSS 12.0 statistical package. The researcher generated a composite relationship quality score for each student and a composite self-efficacy score for each mentor. A number of bivariate correlations were performed to examine relationships between mentor self-efficacy, total hours of training, perceptions of relationship quality and other variables.

Audiotapes of mentor telephone interviews were transcribed. ATLAS TI 5.0, a qualitative data analysis software program, was used for sorting and coding the narratives. The researcher identified relevant themes that illuminated trends in the narrative by employing conceptually clustered matrices, a qualitative analysis tool described by Miles and Huberman (1984). For purposes of this study, the researcher defined themes as issues that were endorsed by at least two mentors. Generally, themes presented were endorsed by more than two mentors in the sample. Any frequency counts presented represent the number of mentors that endorsed each item. Frequencies do not include multiple endorsements by individual mentors during the course of his or her interview.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Mentor Self-Efficacy

The Youth Mentor Self-Efficacy Scale demonstrated an acceptable reliability for this sample ($\alpha = 0.83$). Mentors tended to rate themselves, average to high on the scale. Mentors reported an average self-efficacy score of 59.5 (SD = 6.50), with scores ranging from 48 to 74 out a possible 80 points.

Using responses generated by question five of the interview protocol, four overall themes emerged from the analysis of narratives focused on factors that mentors believe increase their mentoring skills (mentor self-efficacy): 1) active participation in the mentoring relationship; 2) training; 3) the support of a mentoring community; and 4) prior life experience. Item five of the interview protocol was an open-ended question that reads as, “What things do you believe increase your mentoring skills?.”

To analyze the resulting data, the researcher identified factors that were endorsed by at least two mentors. All factors were affirmed by two or more mentors. All together, eight factors were found. Further analysis resulted in interpretative groupings that allowed the eight individual factors to be subsumed under four major themes. A description of the themes and factors follow and Table 1 summarizes these findings.

Table 1:
Factors that Increase Mentors' Self-Efficacy

I. Active Mentor Participation

Duration with Student

Planned Activities

Mentee Feedback

II. Training

Formal Training Sessions

Knowledge of School System

III. Support of Mentoring Community

Program Staff Support

Peer Support

IV. Prior Life Experience

Active Participation

Active participation in mentoring was a particularly prevalent theme. Respondents report that as they persist in their mentoring relationship and interact with their student, their level of efficacy increases: “Every time I go and meet with my mentee, I get better at it...” (Mentor 131); “The longer I do it the better I think I am.” (Mentor 137). Secondly, another common viewpoint mentors recount was that structured program activities provide opportunities for sharing and deepening their knowledge of students beyond the academic boundaries. The following excerpt is illustrative of this viewpoint.

Researcher: Tell me what the planned activities do in terms of how you feel it helps increase your mentoring skills?

Mentor 108: For me, it helps because it's hard for me to think of stuff for a boy.

Researcher: So it provides opportunities for you to bond?

Mentor 108: Yes.

Lastly, mentors value their student's feedback and use this feedback to assist them in improving their mentoring skills. For example, one mentor stated, “Definitely anything my mentee tells me. If she says you helped me a lot with math, but maybe not so much with reading or science, then I focus on what I need to improve to communicate some of the science problems that she's having...”

In summary, with each interaction, mentors grow more comfortable in understanding how to interact, communicate with, and assist their mentee. This particular theme emphasizes the importance of advocating long-term commitment for mentoring relationships and encouraging mentoring pairs to persist despite initial challenges that arise.

Training

Mentors placed varying degrees of emphasis on the importance of training. One prevalent theme that emerged was aspects of trainings and knowledge of the school system

enhance their mentoring skills. “[Program] trainings are really really good. I learned so much about how I should interact with people. And as you are mentoring you start trying to improve yourself slowly” (Mentor 132). “When it comes to academics and trying to help [my mentee] with homework, knowing beforehand what the material I going to be...and having a better background of what they’re doing in school...is what I really feel helps a lot” (Mentor 105). On the other spectrum, a less common viewpoint was that some mentors may prefer a trial and error approach to working with their student, “a lot of the things I just try to feel out for myself at this point” (Mentor 152).

Support of a Mentoring Community

Another less frequently endorsed theme was mentor support. Mentors describe the value of camaraderie that is experienced as a result of being part of a structured mentoring program. “I think it is so important to have a community that the mentor can go to because sometimes I feel I need someone to be able to relate with and be there for me...having another person or several people to be accountable to increases my effectiveness” (Mentor 136). “It does help to have [the program] as an organization because they set up a framework for the mentoring relationship...a set pattern is a really basic part of establishing a relationship and establishing trust” (Mentor 134).

Prior Life Experience

A less common viewpoint that emerged as a theme was mentors’ prior life experiences. Mentors credit previous life experience with helping to increase their mentoring skills. In general, life experiences aid mentors in relating to their students. “I would say the fact that I have a younger brother and have interacted with kids younger than myself...I am able to relate...I think it’s also helpful that I have moved a lot growing up...I been exposed,

so I can relate” (Mentor 131). Also, mentors state that personal traits, such as patience and willingness to understand, along with strong values of education, work ethic, generosity, and appreciation of diversity, contribute to their ability to be effective.

Formal Training and Mentor Self-Efficacy

All mentors are required to attend an initial orientation session prior to being matched with a mentee. In addition, this year the program has instituted monthly workshops. The researcher conducted a document review of the orientation and workshop materials to identify components emphasized in the training. Topics offered fell in to five distinct categories: procedural knowledge, communication skills, academic development, personal development, and relationship development.

Each area of training is designed to accomplish a unique objective. Procedural knowledge covers logistical information, such as location of school; staff and family contact information; and important dates for school closing and activities. Communication skills training consist of techniques for facilitating effective dialogue. Academic development focuses on how to diagnose learning preferences and strategies for support those inclinations. Personal development training concentrates on how to facilitate students’ personal development through guided self-reflection. Relationship development introduces mentor to strategies for building supportive youth-adult relationships, including their roles and responsibilities as a youth mentor. A description of the individual trainings topics is presented in Table 2.

Using interview question eight, mentors were asked to identify training components that assist them in working with their student. After providing an opportunity for free recall

Table 2:
Program Training Topics

Training Topic	Brief Description
	Procedural knowledge
Logistical Information	Information that facilitates meeting with students and participation in the program.
Child Abuse/Neglect Procedure	The procedure for reporting issues of concern.
	Communication skills
Intentional Dialogue	A 3-step model of communication including: mirroring, validation, and empathy.
Active Listening Skills	Effective listening strategies, a 3-step model: Attention, Questioning, and Reflecting
I Messages	Strategies for communicating feelings about acceptable or unacceptable behaviors in a non-judgmental way.
Feelings	Understanding the nature of feelings. Strategies for helping students verbalize their feelings.
	Academic Development
Learning Styles	Model devised by R. Felder & L. Silverman. Hands-on instruction on how to assess and address different learning styles of mentors and students.
	Personal development
Multiple Intelligence	Gardner's theory of eight intelligences. Definitions and hands-on methods for assessing intelligences.
Exploring Gifts & Talents	Strategies for facilitating students' self-discovery process.
	Relationship development
Mentor Roles & Responsibilities	Definition of and expectations for mentors. Goals for a mentoring relationship.
Boundary Setting	Defining the boundaries of the relationship with mentees.
Young Adult Development	Keys to youth developmental Effective strategies for supporting and addressing developmental needs (Konopka, 1973; Pittman, 1991).

in response to type of training they perceived as helpful, the researcher probed specific components that were not mentioned. Free recall items are coded as “salient” with the researcher interpreting these items to be a particularly utility to mentors. Mentors were then asked to rate each probed item as “very helpful”, “moderately helpful”, or “not helpful”. Items that mentors did not remember are coded as “Not Recalled”. Table 3 summarizes the findings.

Collectively, the data presented in Table 3 reflect a high level of overall satisfaction with the training program, with relatively very few "not helpful" ratings. Topics that were the most salient to mentor working with youth are 1) the awareness and ability to diagnose learning styles, and 2) the roles and responsibilities of a mentor. When probed, approximately half or more than half the respondents choose the following topics to be very helpful to the mentoring process: active listening skills, logistical information, mentor roles and responsibilities, and exploring gifts and talents.

Mentors were then asked to select what they consider to be the most helpful component of training. Twenty-six percent of mentors certify that understanding their roles and responsibilities was crucial. “Just knowing my responsibilities, I can work with [my mentee] .to establish the ways that I see best” (Mentor 105). Another twenty-percent of mentors endorsed active listening skills as being the most helpful component. As one mentor said, “active listening is very important because of my personality...I am always trying to give people opinions...I really had to change myself to be able to be a good mentor.” The last notable group, 15% of mentors attest to the instruction provided on identifying learning styles.

Table 3:**Effective Training for Working with Students**

		Percent (and Number) of Total Respondents				
Topic	Total Respondents	Salient	Very Helpful	Moderately Helpful	Not Helpful	No Recall
Academic development						
Learning Styles	18	39% (7)	22% (4)	22% (4)	17% (3)	2
Communication skills						
Intentional Dialogue	18	11% (2)	28% (5)	39% (7)	22% (4)	2
Active Listening Skills	19	11% (2)	58% (11)	26% (5)	5% (1)	1
I Messages	19	16% (3)	11% (2)	63% (12)	11% (2)	1
Feelings	19	16% (3)	21% (4)	53% (10)	11% (2)	1
Personal development						
Multiple Intelligence	14	0% (0)	50% (7)	43% (6)	7% (1)	6
Exploring Gifts & Talents	16	0% (0)	57% (9)	44% (7)	0% (0)	4
Procedural knowledge						
Logistical Information	19	5% (1)	53% (10)	42% (8)	0% (0)	1
Child Abuse/ Neglect Procedure	14	0% (0)	36% (5)	57% (8)	7% (1)	6
Relationship development						
Mentor Roles & Responsibilities	19	26% (5)	47% (9)	21% (4)	5% (1)	1
Boundary Setting	15	7% (1)	20% (3)	60% (9)	13% (2)	5
Young Adult Development	17	18% (3)	35% (6)	41% (7)	6% (1)	3

With the exception of active listening skills, most mentors found communication skills training to be moderately helpful. It appears that mentors need more practice with these communication skills, in order for them to incorporate it into their work with youth. For example one mentor stated, "these techniques seem very positive, but for the younger students, it may not be totally applicable" (Mentor 135). Practice may also be helpful in terms of having mentors understand how to more naturally incorporate techniques into their regular communication pattern "...things like the I-messages and intentional dialogue. It's not really my personal style" (Mentor 162).

Lastly, mentors provided the following recommendations to enhance training: 1) provide more instruction on how to facilitate relationships with guardians, 2) provide easy to understand information curriculum, and 3) provide additional training on tools that can be used for career exploration and learning.

Analysis of the survey data did not indicate correlation between the amount of training received and self-efficacy. Discourse with mentors clearly tell a different story. Interviews revealed some variability in mentors' views towards trainings as a whole. This variability is possibly being reflected in the lack of statistical significance. Another explanation is that the sample size was insufficient.

Mentor Support Structure

Based on interviews with mentors in this program, mentors want and need the support of other adults within the mentee's life. In particular, response to interview question fifteen, mentors described the types of support they found helpful in assisting their efforts. The following are the mentors' expectations for the following groups of people: program staff,

school staff (including teachers, counselor, and administrative personnel), fellow mentors, and student guardians.

Program Staff

Mentors described the staff to be supportive in many ways. The program staff are accessible and approachable. Mentors cited the program staff as the primary provider of advice in working with their mentee. At times, coordinators are called on to intervene with students, teachers, and parents. Mentors also look this to group to provide of resources, including anything from school supplies to science fair project ideas, to arranging transportation. “I can discuss anything about what’s going on with me, or my mentee, or our relationship. They are very approachable and very helpful every time I go” (Mentor 131). Mentors also value the effort of coordinators to invest personally in getting to know them. “It’s not just the words they say. They definitely show their devotion to this cause and what it stands, in just their ability to accommodate people, even outside of their schedules to get to know you better” (Mentor 136). Lastly, the program staff serves as enthusiastic cheerleaders for mentors when the going gets tough. “They show their enthusiasm and that makes others want to be good and just as enthusiastic...leading by example” (Mentor 135). In summary, the program staff provides training and ongoing strategies for developing strong communication and over-coming relationship challenges, as well as encouragement to persist in the face of difficulty.

School Staff

Academic mentors rely on teachers, in particular, and counselors to be necessary partners in the mentoring process. The school staff provides insight into students' academic and behavioral strengths and weakness to aid mentors in promoting intellectual, social, and

emotional development. As one mentor shared, “knowing that we were going to get to work pretty closely with the school...and talk to their teachers, and would get a lot of feedback from people besides the kid” (Mentor 108) was important. Outside of providing feedback and advice, mentors in this program, also desire teachers to take action when needs of the student are uncovered. “I feel there is a lot of emphasis on retaking tests, as opposed to helping them take it well the first time” (Mentor 154). However, statements like these are accompanied with others that reflect a deep understanding of the complexities of acting on such requests. “...the biggest help would be to figure out what is expected of a sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students...they don’t have the basic concepts to be able to do a lot of these things...you keep running into roadblocks as they are learning...” (Mentor 131).

Fellow Mentors

A strong peer network is a vital resource for mentors. The community of fellow mentors offer emotional support by validating each others feelings and sharing experiences that encourage mentors to persist in the face of difficulty and provide them with ideas to do so. Mentors continually stated that they are constantly “sharing and learning from each other” (Mentor 105), “hearing stories and trials” (Mentor 130), “talking through issues” (Mentor 117), and “helping each other with rides” (Mentor 120). They also serve as role models and cheerleaders for one another, as this mentor articulated, “there are some mentors that are so committed and so good at it and you want to be like them. So they just encourage me to be better” (Mentor 132).

In recognition, of the importance of a peer network, the program is constantly working on ways to facilitate camaraderie among mentors. Family groups and leaders originated for this reason. “It provides you with a smaller group of people to talk to about a

problem. Because they are more your peers...you feel more comfortable talking to them..., as opposed to [the director]” (Mentor 141). However, this system has a long way to go before it realizes its true potential. About half the mentors interviewed, share that they have very limited contact with assigned family leaders, primarily because of the difficulties with schedule coordination.

Parents and Guardians

A requirement of this program is that mentors maintain lines of communication with the mentee’s guardians. One mentor articulated the need for a parent-mentor relationship, “I think if I didn’t have a good relationship with my mentee’s mom, I wouldn’t know the mentee, as well. Her mom is very supportive and encouraging for us to meet outside of the school. I think that this really helps me” (Mentor 136). Mentor seeks parents’ support for children’s active participation in the program. One mentor states that, “the kids are going to take it more seriously if they also get a push from their parents” (Mentor 162). This includes: “reinforcing the same [positive messages], such as the importance of academics” (Mentor 131), supporting students participation in extra-curricular events that help foster relationship building, and occasionally providing transportation for student to and from these activities. Lastly, mentors express a desire for open lines of communication with parents to talk about mentees progress, school work, and participation in the program. They welcome parent inquires. When ask how parents support the mentoring relationship, one mentor replied, “They are just very interested in what my student’s doing and what I am doing with her” (Mentor 105). Other mentors express some frustration when communication is poor: “they’re just not aware of what [the program] is” (Mentor 107), “once I contact [The parent],

she's really into it, but she never calls me on her own to find out how things are going” (Mentor 113).

In summary, parents reinforce messages and goals advocated by the mentor, as well as make it possible for students and mentors to interact outside of the school setting. Taken together, parents lend both credibility and resources to mentors that aid in the development of trust and close bonds. Mentors recognize them as critical partners in the mentoring process.

Relationship Quality

Mentors Definition of Relationship Quality

Mentors were asked to rate relationship quality on a scale from 1 to 10. On average, mentors in this sample rated the quality of their relationship fairly high (mean = 7, SD = 0.20), with scores ranging from 5 to 8. Based on this survey data, mentor perception of relationship quality is positively correlated with mentor self-efficacy ($r=0.50$, $p=0.02$).

Mentors provided the criteria used to judge the quality of mentoring relationships. Five general themes emerged: 1) holistic integration of the mentor into student's life, 2) perceptions of growth, 3) perceived mentee investment, 4) closeness of the relationship, and 5) perceptions of mentee satisfaction. To analyze the resulting data, the researcher formulated themes that were endorsed by at least two mentors. Descriptions of themes follow.

Holistic Integration Into Mentee's Life

The notion of integration into the mentee's life was a particularly prevalent theme. Mentors measure the quality of the relationship based on how much a part of the students' life they believe they are. Outside of helping academically, mentors want to know that the

mentee feels comfortable enough to have open and honest communication about student's personal feelings, share aspects of life outside of school, and have a good working relationship with guardians. "If we can have a conversation and talk about things other than just what he needs to do for homework" (Mentor 131). Mentors measure trust by how comfortable the mentee is doing these things, "I know I have trust with my student, instead of talking to any other person about some things, he will talk to me about it" (Mentor 132). Another mentor stated, "I think I gauge [relationship quality] by the more she tells me, the more I feel effective because that's more trust she's putting in me" (Mentor 120). Lastly, getting to know the mentees family is another component. A mentor articulated this best, "one [part] is my relationship with my mentee's family. I think the mentoring relationship extends just beyond the mentor and the mentee. It should incorporate all that is part of [the mentee's] life" (Mentor 141).

Perceptions of Growth

Mentor perceptions of growth emerged as another prevailing viewpoint. Mentors are judging relationship quality based on how both parties are growing and progressing, as a result of the relationship. Mentors want to see that grades improve, as well as the students desire to learn and be more self-directed. "Seeing how her grades go up. Instead of her just trying to get the assignments done, if her grades are going up, then I feel like I am doing my job" (Mentor 120). Mentors also use their own growth to judge the quality of their relationship:

"Also, some other things, like how I address the definition of a mentor and how I feel like I [am measuring up]. The personal growth is not directly between you and your mentee. But at the same time, if you have a better sense of yourself, that helps to have a better relationship with them" (Mentor 141).

Perceptions of Mentee Investment

In response to measuring relationship quality, mentors list behaviors of mentees that seem to capture mentee's commitment and dedication. These behaviors are: seeking help, attending sessions, and taking advice. Mentors report positive feelings towards relationship quality when mentees actively seek them out to be a resource. "I think her calling me on her own, which is pretty big. I would always call her to check in. Now if [my mentee] is having a problem with an assignment we've talked about [she'll call to ask for help]" (Mentor 113). Two mentors also mentioned regular contact being important. Lastly, mentors look for how much the mentee takes action based on the advice they provide. "I think [if my mentee] responds back in a way that she takes the advice I give her...and considers it...and then she tries to [take action]. I think that's partly her respect for what I'm saying" (Mentor 141).

Closeness of the Relationship

Interviewees often mentioned notions of relationship closeness, which proved hard for them to clearly define. One mentor conveyed the following,

"From day to day, I made myself more vulnerable to [my mentee], even though I was getting hurt emotionally, because her behavior had so drastically changed...But something happened in the past month and a half, because we're closer than we've ever been. There is a level of intimacy now, that if you've told me a year ago, I would not have believed it. It goes beyond being open and sharing with each other...I feel it in body language and the way we act around each other has changed" (Mentor 136).

Other mentors referred to this notion of closeness as a "kind of intimate relationship and how they have grown to like you and trust you" (Mentor 108), as well as "a level of understanding that we have about each other, security or emotional safety" (Mentor 130). The underlying connection among these responses appear to be immense levels of trust experienced by both parties as they deepen their understanding of one another.

Perceptions of Mentee Satisfaction

Mentors also use observations of mentee's behaviors and overt expression of emotions to judge relationship quality. Mentors believed that the mentee's level of enthusiasm, or lack thereof, was an indicator of relationship quality. The following comment exemplifies this sentiment, "[The mentee] doesn't dislike me. It's just that I don't have a very good feeling about how I am connecting...I haven't yet found the thing that [my mentee] is enthusiastic about" (Mentor 134). Comments such as these were typical of a mentor who reported relatively low relationship quality ratings. In addition, mentors make judgments about their mentoring relationship based on their perceptions of whether or not the mentee is content with them. "I believe my mentee is happy with me as a mentor" (Mentor 117).

Relationship Quality and Training

It is noteworthy to mention the following observation. Statistical significance was not found between the amount of training received and mentor self-efficacy. However, the correlation between the amount of training hours received by mentors and mentor's perception of relationship quality is statistically significant ($r=0.51$, $p=0.02$). Though, it is unclear whether training impacts relationship quality or whether strong perceptions of quality increase mentors desire to be more active in the program.

Data from this study appear to confirm both interpretations. Mentors certify that trainings are helpful in improving their mentoring skills. Mentor report developing skills that were effective in working with their student, which may in term impact relationship quality. In support of the second explanation, higher levels of mentor activity were associated with greater amounts of training received. Using interview question fourteen, mentors reported if they attended family events hosted by the program, home-visits, and extra-curricular activities. Each item was weighted equally and a total activity score was tallied. So, for example if a mentor reported participating in any two of these activities, the mentor received

an activity score of 2. As a whole, the data imply bidirectional influences among training, self-efficacy, and relationship quality.

Mentee's Perception of Relationship Quality

This study is unable to verify if a relation exists between mentee's perception of relationship quality and mentor's self-efficacy due to an extremely low return rate for parent consent forms (20%). The sample size of thirteen is considerably less than the conventionally standard of 30 required for most statistical procedures. Mentees that returned the survey and consent forms tended to rate the quality of their relationship fairly high. With the maximum rating of 60, the average mentee rating was 53.7 (SD = 1.70). The distribution of scores is not normally distributed.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

Conclusions

Mentoring is an appropriate prevention and intervention strategy for middle school youth confronted by the challenges that accompany entry into adolescence and transitions to a new school environment (Rhodes & Noam, 2002). Yet few empirical research studies are available on the types of training and support mentors need to develop effective mentoring relationships (Herrera et al., 2000). Using Bandura's (1977) self-efficacy as a theoretical framework, this descriptive study explored factors that contribute to the efficacy of adult mentors that work with early adolescent students in a school-based academic mentoring program. With an emphasis on mentor preparation and support, interviews with mentors uncovered a number of factors that appear to enhance mentors' efficacy. Among these factors are mentor-youth relationship duration, formal training, and a broad network of support. These findings support theoretical and empirical self-efficacy research claims that mentors' efficacy is enhanced by the following: 1) performance accomplishments achieved through hands-on practice of skills; 2) vicarious learning through the use of modeling; and 3) verbal persuasion provided during on-going consultation (Bandura, 1977; Lamorey & Wilcox, 2005; Shachar & Shmuelewitz, 1997; Tucker, Porter, Reinke, Herman, Ivery, Mack, & Jackson, 2005). This study also contributes to our knowledge of relationship quality by documenting criteria that mentors use to judge the success of relationships.

In addition, the criteria highlights the myriad of contextual factors that can support or undermine youth mentoring relationships.

The study's findings did not indicate a statistically significant relationship between mentor self-efficacy and the amount of training received. As a whole, interviews revealed variability in mentors' views concerning the importance of trainings. Lack of statistical significance is possibly explained by this variability. It is also possible that the sample size was insufficient to test particular question based on this variability.

In contrast, interviews with mentors clearly point to the contribution of training. Analysis of the narrative data shows that components of training do enhance mentor efficacy. Mentors endorsements, in part, support training recommendations made in the Big Brother Big Sister landmark mentoring evaluative study that include: 1) communication and limit-setting skills, 2) tips on relationship building, and 3) recommendations on the best way to interact with a young person (Grossman & Tierney, 1998). In terms of communication skills training, mentors particularly cite active listening skills to aid in strong communication. Few mentors endorsed limit-setting skills. In part, this discrepancy with prior research may be due the existing structure of school-based programs versus recreational programs that are the focus of the BBBS study. When it comes to relationship building, a particularly prevalent request from mentors was to be provided with clear descriptions of their roles and responsibilities. Lastly, mentors in this study did not appear to strongly endorse tips specific to dealing with young people. Instead, the emerging themes focused on ways to help youth explore the strengths and weakness, both academic and personal.

Findings also suggest particular recommendations for delivery of training. Two major themes emerged: 1) the need for interactive hands on training, and 2) the need for

modeling effective strategies. Mentor training should be hands-on and interactive in order to facilitate transfer of skills. This is in line with self-efficacy theory that posits fostering patterns of success on a task increase efficacy (Bandura, 1977) and implies that ample time should be built into sessions for practicing skills, using strategies such as role playing. Mentors also report the importance of observing successful modeling of mentoring behavior. Opportunities to learn vicariously through modeling are cited as enhancing efficacy beliefs (Bandura, 1977; Lamorey & Wilcox, 2005; Pintrich & Schunk, 2002; Shachar & Shmuelewitz, 1997; Tucker et al., 2005). Again role playing can provide chances for mentors to see these skills successfully demonstrated by both trainers and more experienced mentors, in addition to proving them with practice.

In addition to training, mentors reported the importance of active participation in building mentor self-efficacy. A noteworthy finding of this study, was that mentors endorsed active participation in mentoring slightly more often than formal training. This is in accordance with previous self-efficacy literature, which support assertions that performance achievement is one of the more powerful sources of information that shape efficacy beliefs (Bandura, 1977). These results also reinforce the importance of relationship duration (DuBois & Neville, 1997). Mentors reported that as relationships persists the more efficacious they felt in terms of their mentoring skills.

Another consistent theme that emerging for enhancing mentor self-efficacy was on-going mentor support. Findings indicate the need for a board network of support for academic school-based mentors, inclusive of program and school staff, fellow mentors, and the student's guardians. Through these requests for broad support networks, mentors are advocating for a holistic approach to mentoring in order to be effective. Mentors benefit

from other mentors who can provide additional information, insight, and feedback to deepen their understanding of the student. Together, these four groups "mentor the mentor", so that they can mentor the child by providing evaluative feedback from often mutually exclusive perspectives. Verbal persuasion, in the form of encouragement and feedback, is another type of information that both theory and empirical research purport to increase self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977; Lamorey & Wilcox, 2005; Shachar & Shmuelewitz, 1997; Tucker et al., 2005).

The need for support reinforces the value of school-based programs in that they provided greater structure and supervision for mentoring relationships largely because the program is housed in a school building (Herrara et al., 2000; Sipe & Roder, 1999). The school building allows mentors greater access to a wider variety of people involved in the student's life. Another benefit to a school-based program is that it allows mentors to gather in a common place, thereby providing important vicarious learning opportunities that are used to improve their efficacy beliefs and performance.

Another contribution of this study is in the area of relationship quality. In support of previous research findings (Parra et al., 2002), mentors' perceptions of relationship quality and self-efficacy were positively correlated ($r=0.50$, $p=0.02$). This study provides insight into the criteria that mentors use to judge the quality of the mentor relationship. Five themes emerged: 1) holistic integration of the mentor into student's life, 2) perceptions of growth, 3) perceived mentee investment, 4) closeness of the relationship, and 5) perceptions of mentee satisfaction. These themes demonstrate that mentors use many sources of information to formulate judgments about their relationships, again reinforcing this notion of holistic mentoring.

Most important, the relationship quality criteria highlight the dynamic bidirectional influences of mentor, mentee, and the environmental factors that impact mentoring relationships such as, feedback from: the mentee (e.g., expressions of satisfaction or enthusiasm), mentee's teachers (e.g., progress reports), mentee's parents (e.g., openness to communicate and support active participation), and the program staff (e.g., evaluative feedback regarding mentor and mentee progress). So, bidirectional influences of mentee, mentor, teacher, and parent, can reinforce or undermine the mentoring process. For example, research demonstrates that a student's disengagement towards learning can adversely influence her classroom teacher's response, which in turn reinforces the student's behaviors (Skinner & Belmont, 1993). This finding indicated the importance of monitoring the types of feedback and interactions that mentors and mentees experience over time. This monitoring process is particularly important for mentoring relationships involving early adolescents, especially those also classified as at-risk. Mentee signals of disengagement and emotional inaccessibility can hinder mentors' perceptions of relationship quality, feelings of efficacy, and response behaviors. Additionally, teachers, parents, and staff influences can impact both parties in either positive or negative ways that affect the types of exchanges that they experience.

Lastly, the narrative data indicate that mentors in this program demonstrate a deep commitment to, and connection with, their mentee, as well as a personal investment in their success. This conclusion is drawn from the mentors' desires to be held accountable for their actions; willingness to acknowledge and challenge personal shortcomings that lessen authenticity of interactions; and dedication to invest time in fostering a personal relationship that extends beyond the academic boundaries. Mentoring relationships that result from these

practices can be a stable, enduring, and potent protective factor in countering the turmoil faced by youth in early adolescents.

Limitations of the Study

There are five limitations of this study. Two limitations are a consequence of timing of data collection: 1) lack of baseline data and 2) recall bias. A third limitation is in regards the absence of multi-source data. Additionally, the qualitative data were analyzed and interpreted solely by the researcher, which required additional measures to strengthen validity of the results. Finally, this sample consists of volunteers, which may hinder generalization of findings. These are discussed below.

This study was conducted in March, four months after the initial orientation sessions were provided. A baseline measure of self-efficacy is not available. Therefore, this study cannot definitively credit the program's training for being totally responsible for the relatively high self-ratings of efficacy, as well as, account for variations that exist among mentors that had prior mentoring or tutoring experience.

The data is also subject to recall bias. Mentors were asked to retrospectively rate training sessions. Interviews were completed a considerable amount of time after orientation sessions with time lags ranging from 5 months to 3 years. However, all mentors interviewed have attended at least one mandatory on-going training session during this academic year.

Lack of multi-source data is a methodological weakness of mentoring research (Parra et al., 2002). This study attempted to address this limitation by gathering measures of relationship quality from both mentors and mentees. A low return rate for parental consent forms prevented this study from addressing this common methodological flaw. Further

research will be conducted in this area and student incentives will be offered in the future as a way to increase parental participation.

The interview data was qualitatively analyzed solely by the author. In attempts to increase the reliability and validity the researcher requested that the program staff and senior mentors review and provide feedback on the study's findings. Also, the researcher's prior experience working with the program, in addition to field observations conducted during the recruitment period, also serve to strengthen the validity of interpretation.

Sixty-four out of a total one hundred mentors volunteered to participate in survey portion of this study. Out of this pool, 48 mentors that were randomly chosen to be interviewed and 20 eventually agreed. Generalization of this study to other populations should therefore be made with caution. Mentors that volunteered to be interviewed may be characteristically different from other mentors.

Implications for Research

This study suggests important implications for mentoring research methodology. Interviews with mentors emphasize the ecological context in which mentoring occurs. Mentors describe using a wide variety of sources to arrive at judgments about their efficacy and the quality of their mentoring relationships. Previous research, in addition to this study, documents the importance of these factors in establishing and maintaining beneficial relationships for middle school youth. The mentoring relationship can be positively or negatively influenced by reciprocally deterministic factors such as: mentor and mentee behaviors, teacher appraisals, parent feedback, and staff support. We must begin to

understand how these factors interact individually and collectively to impact the mentoring relationship.

To begin, future research is needed to replicate this study's findings. To determine if conclusions can be generalized, replication is needed using academic adult mentor involved in similar mentoring programs. Studies should also examine how these principles vary across program types and using different training curricula.

It will be also important to study the development of mentor self-efficacy and relationship quality over the course of the relationship. This can potentially add to our understanding of why relationships endure or prematurely terminate. Additionally, investigations on using relationship quality criteria to predict early terminating relationships can be extremely useful in contributing to this understanding, as well.

Additionally, this study represents how relationship quality and self-efficacy beliefs translate into successful mentoring relationships from the perspective of the mentor. It is important to balance this from the perspective of parties, such as mentees, staff, teachers, and parents. According to the mentors in this study, all of these parties all play supporting roles in contributing to the efficacy and relationship quality perceptions. Therefore, it is important to understanding their views and contributions to adolescent mentoring relationships.

Lastly, as the study of mentoring progresses researchers are using other bodies of research to strengthen their inquiry and broaden understanding (e.g., Spencer, 2004). Literature on parental involvement can also prove to be useful. Mentors reported on the importance of a parental presence in strengthening the mentoring relationship. Research on parental involvement documents the positive benefits of parent contributions on student academic achievement (Brough & Irvin, 2001; Pollack, 2004). The same connection appears

to apply to parental support of mentoring relationships. It will be informative for researcher and practioners to understand the dynamics of parental involvement in mentoring relationships and the resulting effect of mentoring relationships in parents' involvement in academics. Researchers studying mentoring programs should monitor and incorporate research findings on parental involvement as a means of accomplishing this objective.

In summary, the findings point to the need for a holistic approach to examining training and support of adult mentors who working with middle school youth. The mentoring relationship is part of a complex system coupled with the complexity of adolescent developmental period. It is unrealistic that individual research studies will be able to focus on the myriad of factors simultaneously. However, it is prudent to be cognizant of the contextual factors that affect the dynamics and progression of adolescent mentoring relationships. Social cognitive framework can prove to be a useful tool to researchers as we begin to understand the social context and reciprocally deterministic influences at play.

Implications for Practice

The following implications are based on study findings. Recommendations are guiding by social cognitive theory. A tabular summary can be found in Appendix G.

Mentors should be provided with opportunities to experience successful execution of tasks, in particular trained tasks. This study reinforces previous research that asserts the benefits of long-term mentoring relationships for youth and extends this claim to mentors. Mentors reported that their sense of efficacy increased, along with perceptions of relationship quality, as the relationship persisted and they had chances to interact that deepened understanding of one another. Along these lines, structured activities provide other occasions

for these interactions to transpire that extend beyond academics. It also follows that mentoring pairs should be encouraged to give their relationship a chance to develop prior to ending due to early challenges. However, close monitoring and guidance should be provided to pairs in these cases. Additionally, mentors report all training provided as positive, but may need more practice time built into sessions that allow them to 1) learn how incorporate skills into their personal style, and 2) apply them to relevant circumstances and challenges they experience with students and other members of the support team.

Vicarious or observational learning opportunities are important for increasing mentors' self-efficacy. Narrative data provide accounts of program staff and fellow mentors modeling effective communication strategies and empathy strategies either during training sessions or during actual mentoring sessions. Practitioners should use every opportunity to model these skills, in and outside of training sessions. In addition to program staff, mentors also serve as role models. Program coordinators should facilitate interaction among mentors, so that they have an opportunity to learn from each other. Having mentoring pairs meet or gather in a central location is one way to facilitate observational learning, which are already typically a part of most school-based programs' structure.

Verbal persuasion is another source of information that increases mentors' efficacy. Opportunities to provide encouragement and evaluative feedback should be made available. Encouragement and feedback can be provided by program coordinators, fellow mentors, or other supportive individuals. Lastly, research links relationship quality to relationship benefits. This study uncovered criteria which mentors use to judge relationship quality. Using these criteria to help mentors assess value of relationships may allow coordinators to monitor relationship progress and address concerns that can adversely hinder it.

Additionally, the relationship quality criteria can provide indications of premature relationship termination that results due to mentor dissatisfaction and provide occasion to offer evaluative feedback and encouragement.

Appendix A

Profile of Interviewed Mentors

Program Experience

Level of Experience	Number of Interviewees (N=20)
Less than 1 year	10
Between 1.1 and 2 years	4
Between 2.1 and 3 years	6

Relationship Duration

Duration	Number of Interviewees (N=20)
Less than 1 year	12
Between 1.1 and 2 years	5
Between 2.1 and 3 years	3

Relationship Characteristics

Cross-Race Matches	17 out of 20 pairs
Same- Gender Matches	18 out of 20 pairs

Academic Standing

Education Level	Number of Interviewees (N=20)
Underclassman (Freshman & Sophomores)	5
Upperclassmen (Junior & Seniors)	11
Graduate Students & Working Professionals	4

Appendix B

Mentor Interview Protocol

Purpose: The purpose of this interview is to learn about factors that increase your ability to be an effective mentor. As a reminder, the interview will take approximately 30 minutes and everything you say will be kept confidential. Participants will not be identified by name in any reporting. Also, the program is open to learning about how they can improve your experience, so please feel free to openly share what you consider to be both strengths and weaknesses of the program. You may skip any questions or end the interview at any time. Lastly, I acknowledge your mentees privacy, so unless necessary I will ask you not to share anything personal. Do you have any questions before we begin? Do I have your permission to record this interview?

1. How long have you participated in the [the program]?
2. How long have you been working with your current mentee?
3. Have you had other mentoring experiences prior to becoming involved in the [the program]?
If yes, please describe.
4. What is your definition of a mentor?
5. What things do you believe increase your mentoring skills?
6. How would you rate the quality of your mentoring relationship on a scale of 1 to 10?
7. What criteria did you use to rate your relationship quality?

Reflecting on Training that you received to be a mentor, considering both the orientation and on-going workshops...

8. What aspects of these training were helpful in assisting you to work with your mentee?

1=open/2=probed)

<input type="checkbox"/> Practical School Info	<input type="checkbox"/> Developmental Theory	<input type="checkbox"/> Active Listening	<input type="checkbox"/> I-Messages
<input type="checkbox"/> Intentional Dialogue	<input type="checkbox"/> Learning Styles	<input type="checkbox"/> Roles & Responsibilities	<input type="checkbox"/> Feelings
<input type="checkbox"/> Mult. Intelligence	<input type="checkbox"/> Gifts & Talents	<input type="checkbox"/> Child Abuse/Neglect	<input type="checkbox"/> Boundary Setting
Very Helpful Moderately Helpful Not Helpful			

9. Which aspect/topic was the most helpful?
10. Any aspects or topics covered in the training that you didn't find helpful?
11. What additional training would you have liked prior to being matched with your mentee?
12. Now, in general what additional training do feel would be helpful?
13. What recommendations do you have to improve training of [program] mentors?
14. Have you attended: ☐ Family Events ☐ Home-visits ☐ Extra-Curricular Activities
15. Are the following people helpful in supporting you? Yes, No, or Somewhat and Why?:

- ☐Y ☐N ☐SW RO Director & Coords
- ☐Y ☐N ☐SW Scarlet Teachers, Counselors, & Staff
- ☐Y ☐N ☐SW Family Leaders
- ☐Y ☐N ☐SW Fellow Mentors
- ☐Y ☐N ☐SW Parents

Some final questions...

16. Some demographic information:
 - a. Year in School
 - b. Ethnicity
 - e. Mentee- Same/Different Gender
 - b. Major/School
 - d. Mentee – Same or different ethnicity
17. Is there anything else you would like share about your experiences as a RO mentor relevant to what we have spoken about?
18. Do you have any other questions for me?

Appendix C

Mentor Self-Efficacy Scale

Introduction: We would like to learn more about your beliefs in your ability to be a mentor.

Directions: Please indicate your response by circling Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree(D), or Strongly Disagree(SD) to the right of each question.

- | | | | | |
|---|----|---|---|----|
| 1. I have problems helping my mentee understand his or her responsibilities as a student. | SA | A | D | SD |
| 2. I can act as an advocate for my mentee in school-related matters. | SA | A | D | SD |
| 3. I'm not sure how to work with my mentee to identify a starting point for his or her personal growth. | SA | A | D | SD |
| 4. I can help my mentee develop a personal awareness of his or her learning style and strengths. | SA | A | D | SD |
| 5. During our sessions, I am able to promote my mentee's own problem solving through good use of questioning. | SA | A | D | SD |
| 6. I wonder if I am in over my head when helping with my mentee's issues. | SA | A | D | SD |
| 7. I wonder if I have the necessary skills to be an effective mentor. | SA | A | D | SD |
| 8. I can act as an advocate for my mentee in non-school-related matters. | SA | A | D | SD |
| 9. I can use my knowledge of child development in supporting my mentee. | SA | A | D | SD |
| 10. I am continually finding better ways to be a mentor to my mentee. | SA | A | D | SD |
| 11. When meeting with my mentee, I usually welcome their questions. | SA | A | D | SD |
| 12. When my mentee talks with me, I use good listening skills. | SA | A | D | SD |
| 13. I have problems helping my mentee understand the importance of his or her choices. | SA | A | D | SD |
| 14. I am not very effective in monitoring my mentee's academic growth. | SA | A | D | SD |
| 15. I struggle when I try to acknowledge the accomplishments of my mentee. | SA | A | D | SD |
| 16. When meeting with my mentee, I can communicate how our meetings have promoted my own personal growth. | SA | A | D | SD |
| 17. I have difficulty managing our sessions, so that we accomplish assignments. | SA | A | D | SD |
| 18. I am able to use my mentee's tests to assist him or her in observing his or her own academic growth. | SA | A | D | SD |
| 19. I can facilitate discussions with my mentee about his or her choices or behavior that I find troubling. | SA | A | D | SD |
| 20. I struggle with getting to know my mentee's guardian(s). | SA | A | D | SD |

Appendix D

The Mentoring Relationship Scale (Rhodes, Reddy, Roffman, & Grossman, 2005)

Introduction: We would like to learn more about your relationship with your mentor. Only the researcher will see your answers.

Directions: Please pick your answer by circling the number 1 – 4 next to each question.

Answer Choices for 1 – 12 (1=Very True to 4=Not at all true)

		1 Very True	2	3	4 Not at all true
1.	Sometimes my mentor promises that we will do something and then we don't do it.	1	2	3	4
2.	My mentor makes fun of me in ways I don't like.	1	2	3	4
3.	I wish my mentor were different.	1	2	3	4
4.	When my mentor gives me advice, she/he makes me feel kind of stupid.	1	2	3	4
5.	When I am with my mentor, I feel ignored.	1	2	3	4
6.	When I am with my mentor, I feel bored.	1	2	3	4
7.	When I am with my mentor, I feel mad.	1	2	3	4
8.	I feel that I can't trust my mentor with secrets because she/he would tell my parent/guardian.	1	2	3	4
9.	When I am with my mentor, I feel disappointed.	1	2	3	4
10.	I wish my mentor knew me better.	1	2	3	4
11.	I wish my mentor spent more time with me.	1	2	3	4
12.	I wish my mentor asked me more often what I think.	1	2	3	4

Answer Choices for 13– 15 (1=Hardly Ever to 4=Pretty Often)

		1 Hardly Ever	2	3	4 Pretty Often
13.	When something is bugging me, my mentor listens while I get it off my chest.	1	2	3	4
14.	My mentor has lots of good ideas about how to solve a problem.	1	2	3	4
15.	My mentor helps me take my mind off things by doing something with me.	1	2	3	4

Appendix E

Invitation Letters

Middle School Student Invitation

Hello Mentee,

I am a Master's student in the School of Education at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill and Dr. Judith Meece is my faculty advisor. You are being invited to be part of a research study that is a requirement towards completion of my master's degree. The goal of the study is to learn more about how mentor training affects mentoring relationships. You are being asked to be in this study because you participate in a mentoring relationship. The following pages will tell you more about this study.

If you volunteer to be part of the study, you will sign page 5 of this packet, complete a short survey on page 7, and return them along with your parent permission form to the sealed box in the [program] Room. Your answers will not be shared with your mentor, guardian, or the program staff. Your mentor will also be asked to participate in this study. To honor your privacy, I will look at your responses after I speak with your mentor.

You need your parent's permission to participate. Your participation in the program will not be affected by your decision to participate, or not participate, in the study.

Thank you for your help,

Karyl Shand Askew

Karyl Shand Askew
Researcher and Master's Student
School of Education
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Judith Meece

Judith Meece
Professor and Chair
Human Development & Psychological Studies
School of Education
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Adult Mentor Invitation

Hello Mentor,

I am a Master's student in the School of Education at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill and Dr. Judith Meece is my faculty advisor. You are being invited to be part of a research study that is a requirement towards completion of my master's degree. The goal is to learn more about mentor training. You are being asked to be in this study because you participate in the mentoring program. The following pages will tell you more about this study.

This study requires you to complete a short survey and participate in a 30-minute telephone interview. Your individual answers will not be shared with your mentee, his or her guardians, or the [program] staff. Your mentee will also be asked to complete a survey as part of this study. To honor your mentee's privacy, his or her survey response will be reviewed and analyzed after your telephone interview and will not be disclosed to you.

If you volunteer to be part of the study sign page 5, complete the attached survey on page 7, and return these two documents to the sealed box in the [program] room. If your mentoring pair volunteers and is randomly chosen to participate in the study, I will contact you via email next week to schedule the telephone interview. Your participation in the program will not be affected by your decision to participate, or not participate, in the study.

Thank you for your help,

Karyl Shand Askew
Karyl Shand Askew
Researcher and Master's Student
UNC-CH School of Education

Judith Meece
Judith Meece
Professor and Chair
Human Development & Psychological Studies
UNC-CH School of Education

Parent/Guardian Invitation Letter

Hello Parent,

I am a Master's student in the School of Education at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill and Dr. Judith Meece is my faculty advisor. You are being asked to allow your child to take part in a research study that is a requirement towards completion of my master's degree. The goal is to learn more about how mentor training affects mentoring relationships.

Your child is being asked to be in this study because he or she participates in a mentoring relationship. Your child will be asked to complete a short survey that explores impressions of his or her mentor. The following pages will tell you more about this study. If you wish to voluntarily give permission to allow your child to participate in this research study, please sign a copy of the last page and have your child place it in the sealed drop-box in the [program] room at school.

Your child's participation in the program will not be affected by his or her decision to participate, or not participate, in the study.

Thank you for your help,

Karyl Shand Askew

Karyl Shand Askew
Researcher and Master's Student
School of Education
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Judith Meece
Judith Meece
Professor and Chair
Human Development & Psychological Studies
School of Education
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Appendix F

Email Letters to Mentor to Schedule Telephone Interview

Subject: Interview, Mentor Training Study

Dear _____,

Thank you for volunteering to participate in the “Mentor Training, Self-Efficacy, and Relationship Quality” research study. You have been randomly chosen to participate in a 30-minute telephone interview. I am writing to schedule this interview with you. Please reply to this message with the following information: 1) Accept or Decline Invitation, 2) two 30-minute time slots that most conveniently fit your schedule this week (3/15 - 3/19), and 3) confirm that the best number to reach you on is XXX-XXX-XXXX, (provided by you when you completed the initial survey).

Please note:

- 1) Your participation in this interview is completely voluntary.
- 2) A copy of the interview protocol is attached as a courtesy.
- 3) You are responding to a private password protected account, but privacy of electronic mail communications cannot be guaranteed.

Sincerely,
Karyl Askew, Researcher, UNC-CH

Subject: Re: Interview, Mentor Training Study

Dear _____,

This is to confirm that your 30-minute telephone interview has been scheduled for:

Thursday, February 2, from 10 – 10:30am.

Please note:

- 1) Your participation in this interview is completely voluntary.
- 2) You are responding to a private password protected account, but privacy of electronic mail communications cannot be guaranteed.

Sincerely,
Karyl Askew, Researcher, UNC-CH

Appendix G

Recommendations for Academic Mentoring Practitioners Based on Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1977)

Performance Accomplishments Opportunities

- Encourage long-term mentoring relationships that persist beyond one year to increase the potential of fostering high quality relationships.
- While providing close guidance and monitoring, encourage mentoring pairs to persist despite initial challenges to allow mentors and mentees to deepen their understanding of one another.
- Provide structured activities that offer other opportunities for mentors and mentees to develop relationships that extend beyond academics.
- Use role-playing and other interactive training strategies focused on realistic mentoring challenges to allow mentors time to assimilate skills into their personal learning style.
- Use role-playing and other interactive training strategies that model how to foster communication with teachers, guardians, other important adults in the mentee's life.

Vicarious Learning Opportunities

- Facilitate interaction among mentors that encourage them to learn from each other.
- Model communication strategies as you interact with mentors during trainings and in and outside mentoring sessions that allow opportunities to deepen their understanding its applications.

Verbal Persuasion Opportunities

- Provide verbal encouragement and focused evaluative feedback to increase mentors' confidence in their skills.
 - Utilize the five criteria to monitor mentors' perceptions of efficacy and relationship quality.
-

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